Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of allocating a prize using a gaming apparatus, including: a primary controller for determining the award of a prize; and ~~an~~ a plurality of auxiliary controllers capable of communication with the primary controller, the auxiliary controllers being further capable of communication with a respective set of one or more gaming terminals, comprising:

at each auxiliary controller:

receiving ~~at the auxiliary controller~~ data from one or more of ~~the~~ its respective set

of gaming terminals, the data including at least one gaming terminal identifier

and associated gaming terminal accumulated amount;

storing the data in a memory accessible to the auxiliary controller;

deriving a total contributory amount in response to the gaming terminal

accumulated amounts; and

communicating the total contributory amount ~~from the auxiliary controller~~ to the

primary controller;

at the primary controller:

determining ~~at the primary controller~~ whether or not to award a prize based upon

one or more of the total contributory amounts received from one or more of the

auxiliary controllers, wherein a determination to award a prize is caused by a

particular one of the total contributory amounts from a particular one of the

auxiliary controllers;

if a prize is determined to be awarded, communicating data associated with the

determination ~~from the primary controller~~ to the <u>particular one of the</u> auxiliary

controller<u>s</u>; and

<u>at the particular one of the auxiliary controllers:</u>

analyzing ~~at the auxiliary controller~~ the data associated with the determination and

the data stored in the memory to determine ~~to~~ which <u>particular one</u> of the

gaming terminals <u>caused</u> the prize <u>to be awarded, and determining that a prize</u>

is to be allocated <u>to that particular one of the gaming terminals</u>.

2.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 including deriving a respective contributory amount in response to each gaming terminal accumulated amount.

3.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 including deriving a total accumulated amount in response to the gaming terminal accumulated amounts.

4.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 3 wherein the total contributory amount comprises a portion of the total accumulated amount.

5.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 3 wherein the total contributory amount comprises any one of a proportion, fraction or percentage of the total accumulated amount.

6.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 5 further comprising comparing a portion of the total accumulated amount and the total accumulated amount to determine the proportion, fraction or percentage.

7.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the auxiliary controller<u>s</u> communicate~~s~~ with the primary controller via a wide area network having a bandwidth of less than or equal to 10,000 bits per second.

8.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the auxiliary controllers communicates with the gaming terminals via a local area network having a bandwidth approximately equal to 10 mega bits per second.

9.   Cancelled

10.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the auxiliary controllers and the primary controller are geographically separate and each of the auxiliary controllers are is disposed at a separate venues.

11.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 further comprising communicating a respective an auxiliary controller identifier from the each auxiliary controller to the primary controller.

12.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the step of storing the data in a memory accessible to the auxiliary controller includes storing a list of the gaming terminal identifiers and the associated gaming terminal accumulated amounts ordered chronologically as received by the auxiliary controller.

13.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein the each auxiliary controller maintains an inventory of gaming terminal identifiers and is responsive to a signal from the primary controller for transmitting changes in the inventory to the primary controller.

14.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 further comprising, at each auxiliary controller, communicating a contributory amount to the primary controller once for each of a predefined polling period.

15.   (Original) A method according to claim 14 wherein the predefined polling period is at least 2 seconds.

16.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14 wherein the predefined polling period is at least 1 second.

17.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 including the step of communicating a win message from the <u>particular one of the</u> auxiliary controller<u>s</u> to the gaming terminal to which the prize is to be allocated.

18.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 including the step of communicating a win message from the auxiliary controller to the primary controller.

19.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the method is performed at least once every 5 seconds.

20.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the method is performed at least once every 2 to 3 seconds.

21.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the gaming terminals include at least one of:

a poker machine;

a point of sale register;

a mobile phone;

a personal computer;

an access control point; and

a television.

22.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus for allocating a prize, the apparatus including:

a primary controller, ~~an~~ <u>a plurality of</u> auxiliary controller<u>s</u> and a plurality of gaming terminals,

~~the~~ <u>each</u> auxiliary controller having<u>:</u>

first communication means for receipt of data from <u>a respective set of</u> one or more

of the gaming terminals, the data including one or more gaming terminal

identifier and associated gaming terminal accumulated amount<u>s</u>,

~~the auxiliary controller having~~ a memory for storage of the data;

~~the auxiliary controller having~~ a processor for deriving a total contributory amount

from the gaming terminal accumulated amount; <u>and</u>

~~the auxiliary controller having~~ second communication means for communication to

the primary controller of the total contributory amount;

the primary controller having<u>:</u>

a comparator for determination of whether or not to award a prize based at least in

part upon <u>one or more of</u> the total contributory amount<u>s received from one or</u>

<u>more of the auxiliary controllers, wherein a determination to award a prize is</u>

<u>caused by a particular one of the total contributory amounts from a particular</u>

<u>one of the auxiliary controllers</u>; <u>and</u>

~~the primary controller having~~ access to the second communication means so as to

communicate data associated with the determination to the <u>particular one of the</u>

auxiliary controller<u>s</u>; and

<u>wherein the particular one of</u> the auxiliary controllers <u>is</u> ~~being~~ responsive to the data
associated with the determination and the data stored in the memory so as to determine ~~to~~
which <u>particular one</u> of the gaming terminals <u>caused</u> the prize <u>to be awarded, and to</u>
<u>determine that a prize</u> is to be allocated <u>to that particular one of the gaming terminals</u>.

23.   (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 22 wherein the first
communication means comprises a local area network and the second communication means
~~is~~ comprises a wide area network.

24.   (Currently Amended) A method of allocating a prize in a gaming system
having a primary controller, ~~an~~ <u>a plurality of</u> auxiliary controller<u>s</u> and<u>, for each auxiliary</u>
<u>controller, a respective set of one or more</u> ~~a~~ plurality of gaming terminals, comprising:
        <u>at each auxiliary controller:</u>

collating and storing data ~~at the auxiliary controller~~ indicative of accumulated

amounts associated with one or more of ~~the~~ <u>its respective set of</u> gaming

terminals;

calculating a total contributory amount ~~at the auxiliary controller~~; <u>and</u>

communicating the total contributory amount to the primary controller;

~~using~~ <u>at</u> the primary controller<u>,</u>

<u>determining</u> ~~to determine~~ whether or not to award a prize and to determine data

associated with the determination, <u>wherein a determination to award a prize is</u>

<u>caused by a particular one of the total contributory amounts from a particular</u>

<u>one of the auxiliary controllers</u>;

communicating the data associated with the determination to the <u>particular one of the</u>

auxiliary controller<u>s</u>; and

~~using~~ <u>at the particular one of</u> the auxiliary controller<u>s, determining which particular one</u>

<u>of the gaming terminals caused the prize to be awarded, and determining that a prize is to be</u>

<u>allocated to that particular one of the gaming terminals</u> ~~to determine to which of the gaming~~

~~terminals the prize should be awarded~~.